

REMARKS

This application has again been reviewed, in light of the Advisory Action dated July 9, 2007. Claims 1, 2 and 6-17 are presented for examination, of which Claims 1, 11 and 14-17 are in independent form. Claim 5 has been canceled, and Claims 1, 6, 11 and 14 have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention.; these actions are taken without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. Claims 15-17 have been added. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Independent Claim 1 is directed to an information processing method for setting an exclusive control right of a data item by a specific process in a system in which a plurality of processes that can communicate with each other via an information transmission medium share data including a plurality of data items. That method comprises a first designation step, of designating a data item for which the exclusive control right is to be set, and a retrieval step, of retrieving a data item which belongs to a lower layer of the data item designated in the first designation step on the basis of hierarchical structure information of the plurality of data items. In a determination step, a determination is made as to whether or not an exclusive control right by another process is set, for each data item retrieved in the retrieval step, and in a setting step, the exclusive control right for the specific process is set, as to the designated data item and as to a retrieved data item retrieved in the retrieval step and for which it is determined in the determination step that an exclusive control right by another process is not set. The method also includes a second designation step, of designating a data item for which the exclusive control right is to be released, and a first release step, of releasing the exclusive control right of the specific process as to the data item designated in the second designation step and a data item which belongs to a lower layer of the data item designated in the second designation step, while

maintaining the exclusive control right of the specific process as to a data item which belongs to an upper layer of the data item designated in the second designation step.

Applicants submit that nothing in the prior art of record would teach or suggest releasing an exclusive control right as to a designated data item and as to a data item which belongs to a lower layer with respect to the designated data item, while maintaining the exclusive control right as to a data item which belongs to an upper layer with respect to the designated data item, as recited in Claim 1.

Each of the other independent claims also recites such a feature, and each therefore is believed to be allowable over the art of record.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim also is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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